

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Improve Road Safety and Update Bicycling Laws

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 14 MRSA §159-D is enacted to read:

§ 159-D. Liability related to a bicyclist using a drive-up window

1. Limited liability. An establishment that has a drive-up window is not liable for personal injury, property damage or death caused to a bicyclist who uses that establishment's drive-up window.

2. Limitations. This section does not limit any liability that may otherwise exist for willful or malicious actions or failures to guard or warn against a known dangerous condition related to the use of the drive-up window.

3. No duty created. This section does not create a duty of care or ground for liability.

4. Costs and fees. The court may award any direct legal costs, including reasonable attorney's fees, to an establishment that is found not to be liable for injury to a bicyclist pursuant to this section.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2063, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2005, c. 577, §29, is further amended to read:

1. Definitions. For the purpose of this section, "bicycle" includes a motorized bicycle, a motorized tricycle or a motorized scooter, and "toy vehicle" includes, but is not limited to, skateboards, rollerskates, wagons, sleds and coasters.

Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §2063, sub-§2, as repealed and replaced by PL 2001, c. 667, Pt. C, §17, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

2. Riding to the right. A person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at that time and place shall drive on the right portion of the way as far as practicable except when it is unsafe to do so or:

A. When overtaking and passing another bicycle or other vehicle proceeding in the same direction;

B. When preparing for or making a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway;

C. When proceeding straight in a place where right turns are permitted; and

D. When necessary to avoid hazardous conditions, including, but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, animals, broken pavement, glass, sand, puddles, ice, surface hazards or opening doors from parallel-parked vehicles, or a lane of substandard width that makes

it unsafe to continue along the right portion of the way. For purposes of this paragraph, "lane of substandard width" means a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side in the lane.

This subsection does not apply in a municipality that, by ordinance approved by the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Transportation, makes other provisions regarding the operating location of a bicycle on a roadway.

Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §2063, sub-§3, as amended by PL 2003, c. 452, Pt. Q, §42 and affected by Pt. X, §2, is further amended to read:

3. Seating. A person operating a bicycle may not ride other than upon or astride a regular and permanently attached seat.

Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §2063, sub-§4, as repealed and replaced by PL 2001, c. 667, Pt. C, §17, is amended to read:

4. Hitching rides. A person riding on a bicycle;~~or~~ scooter ~~or~~ toy vehicle may not attach it to a moving vehicle on a way.

Sec. 6. 29-A MRSA §2063, sub-§7, as repealed and replaced by PL 2001, c. 667, Pt. C, §17, is amended to read:

7. Penalties. A person 17 years of age or over who violates this section commits a ~~traffic infraction~~civil violation for which a ~~forfeiture~~fine of ~~not less than \$25 and not more than \$10~~not less than \$25 and not more than \$250 may be adjudged. A person under 17 years of age is not subject to a fine under this section.

Sec. 7. 29-A MRSA §2063-B is enacted to read:

§ 2063-B. Toy vehicles

1. Definitions. For the purpose of this section, "toy vehicle" includes, but is not limited to, skateboards, rollerskates, wagons, sleds and coasters.

2. Hitching rides. A person riding on a toy vehicle may not attach it to a moving vehicle on a way.

3. Penalties. A person 17 years of age or over who violates this section commits a civil violation for which a fine of not less than \$25 and not more than \$250 may be adjudged.

4. Impoundment. The chief of police of a municipality, or if there is no chief of police, the chair of the local legislative body, when satisfied that a juvenile under 17 years of age has ridden a toy vehicle in violation of this section, may impound the toy vehicle for a period not to exceed 5 days for the first offense, 10 days for a 2nd offense and 30 days for a subsequent offense.

Sec. 8. 29-A MRSA §2070, sub-§1-A is enacted to read:

1-A. Passing bicycle. An operator of a motor vehicle that is passing a bicycle proceeding in the same direction shall exercise due care by leaving a distance between the motor vehicle and the bicycle of not less than 3 feet while the motor vehicle is passing the bicycle. A motor vehicle operator may pass a bicycle traveling in the same direction in a no-passing zone only when it is safe to do so.

Sec. 9. 29-A MRSA §2070, sub-§6, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

6. Passing on the right. An operator may pass a vehicle on the right only under the following conditions:

- A. When the vehicle to be passed is making or about to make a left turn;
- B. On a way with unobstructed pavement not occupied by parked vehicles and of sufficient width for 2 or more lines of traffic in each direction; or
- C. On a way on which traffic is restricted to one direction, when the roadway is free from obstructions and of sufficient width for 2 or more lines of traffic.

An operator may pass on the right only under conditions permitting that movement in safety. An operator may not overtake by driving off the pavement or main traveled portion of the way.

A person operating a bicycle may pass a vehicle on the right at the bicyclist's own risk.

Sec. 10. 29-A MRSA §2085, as amended by PL 1999, c. 753, §5, is further amended to read:

§ 2085. Designated no-passing zones in residential areas

A municipality may request the department to designate a segment of a state or state aid highway in that municipality as a no-passing zone if the highway is outside the compact area of an urban compact municipality, as defined in Title 23, section 754. Such a request must be in writing to the commissioner and may be made only with the approval of the municipality's legislative body. A request is limited to segments of 2-lane ways in primarily residential areas and must be accompanied by a map showing the location of the proposed no-passing zone or zones and a written explanation of the need for such a zone in each location. The commissioner shall approve such a request unless the commissioner determines that granting such a request will unreasonably restrict the efficient flow of traffic or result in a threat to public safety in that location. The commissioner shall notify the municipality in writing of the commissioner's decision within 30 days of receiving the written request from the municipality. If a request is denied, the notification must state the specific reasons for the denial. A municipality whose request is denied may request the department to hold a public hearing within that municipality for the purpose of receiving public input on the requested change. The department shall hold the hearing within 30 days after a request is made and must inform the municipality of its final decision within 30 days after the hearing is held.

As soon as practicable after approving a municipal request, the department shall ensure that double, solid, yellow center lines are painted along the entire length of the no-passing zone ~~and that the zone is posted as a no-passing zone, at a minimum, in each direction at the start and end of the zone.~~ The municipality may request additional posting along the length of the zone and shall reimburse the department for the costs of all posting.

A no-passing zone is not enforceable until the painting and posting required by this section is completed. A motor vehicle operator who passes another motor vehicle traveling in the same direction in a no-passing zone commits a traffic infraction.

§2085. Riding in trunk prohibited

(As enacted by PL 1999, c. 183, §12 is REALLOCATED TO TITLE 29-A, SECTION 2086)

§2085. Transporting dogs in open vehicle regulated

(As enacted by PL 1999, c. 254, §26 is REALLOCATED TO TITLE 29-A, SECTION 2087)

§2085. Passengers restricted to passenger compartment of pickup truck

(As enacted by PL 1999, c. 311, §1 is REALLOCATED TO TITLE 29-A, SECTION 2088)

Nothing in this section limits the enforceability of signs installed under section 2051.

Sec. 11. 29-A MRSA §2326, as enacted by PL 1999, c. 331, §1, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

§ 2326. Education; violations and enforcement

A person who violates section 2323, subsection 1 commits a civil violation.

1. Education. For a first violation of section 2323, subsection 1, a law enforcement officer may provide bicycle safety information to the person. The officer may also inform that person's parent or guardian about the provisions of this chapter and about where to obtain a bicycle helmet.

2. Forfeiture. For a 2nd or subsequent violation of section 2323, subsection 1, a forfeiture of no more than \$25 may be adjudged. The fine may be waived if a person presents proof of purchase of a bicycle helmet since the citation.

Effective September 20, 2007